



NEWSLETTER



March 2011

Sheridan Co. FSA

119 N. Jackson
Plentywood, MT
406-765-1550 phone
406-765-1551 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/mt
donna.hilyard@mt.usda.gov

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Office Staff:

Donna Hilyard, CED, ext. 102
Donelda Buckalew, PT, ext. 105
Kathy Gray, PT, ext. 100
Marcia Rice, PT, ext. 112
Michael Sandoval, PT, ext. 110
Susan Thompson, TE, ext. 10

County Committee

Members:

Gordon French
Kevin Wilson
Jody Lagerquist
Ellen Sedgwick

Next County Committee Meeting:

3/9/11, 9:00 a.m.

Agricultural Lending Opportunities

Questions regarding obtaining credit to start or enlarge a farming or ranching operation; financing agricultural operating expenses; or livestock, machinery purchases call:
Richland Co. FSA Office
406-433-2103 Ext 2

Reasonable

Accommodations:

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any FSA programs should contact the Donna Hilyard at the FSA Office or the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

CRP General Signup March 14 to April 15, 2011

General signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will run March 14 through April 15, 2011. You may contact the office and make an appointment to signup.

Eligible land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup. Land must be cropland that was planted to an ag commodity 4 of the 6 years from 2002 to 2007. Alfalfa or other multi-year grasses and legumes grown in a rotation not to exceed 12 years may be eligible. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011.

To be eligible for CRP enrollment, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the end of the CRP signup. Landlords shall, when the acreage offered is not in CRP at the time of signup, provide tenants who have an interest in that acreage an opportunity to participate in CRP. The number of tenants on the farm shall not be reduced as a result of or in anticipation of CRP enrollment. When the acreage offered is enrolled in CRP at the time of signup, tenants with an interest in that acreage shall be provided an opportunity to participate in CRP if the tenant is otherwise involved in farming other cropland acreage on the farm, or if the tenant will have an interest in the acreage being offered on 10/1/11.

As administrator of the Conservation Reserve Program, FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that assists in calculating the environmental benefits to be gained from the contract. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits). Cost factors are also entered into the equation.

In addition to the general sign-up, FSA's CRP Continuous Sign-up Program is ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov and view *Conservation Programs*.

Commodity Loans and LDP's

Commodity loans, also referred to as Marketing Assistance Loans, are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for all risk of loss or damage to the commodity, and title to the commodity. During the term of the loan, loss of beneficial interest is a violation of loan provisions. Violating provisions of a grain loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan, and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

March 31, 2011 is the deadline to apply for a loan or LDP (Loan Deficiency Payment) on 2009-crop Barley, Canola, Flax, Oats, Rapeseed, Crambe and Wheat. **May 31** is the final date to apply for a loan or LDP on 2009-crop Corn, Peas, Lentils, Mustard, Safflower, Small Chickpeas, and Sunflower.

Remember that you must notify the FSA office if you will be moving grain to an off-farm location for cleaning, or you'll be cleaning it on the farm and putting it in a different bin. **Before loan grain is used for seed**, you will need to repay the loan on those seed bushels.

WOOL PRODUCERS: There is an LDP rate of \$.29/lb. on wool sheared in 2011. You must make sure to file page 1 of the CCC-633EZ LDP form before you lose beneficial interest, which can occur when wool is delivered to a wool pool!

DCP and ACRE SIGNUP DEADLINE

June 1, 2011 is the signup deadline for 2011 DCP (Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program) and ACRE (Average Crop Revenue Election Program). It is the operator's responsibility to send the appropriate pages on for their owners' signatures. Late-filed applications will not be accepted. If you have any changes to your farming operation, please let us know right away.

ACRE participants need to determine their crop production on a tract basis for 2010 actual production and report it to the FSA office before July 15, 2011. ACRE payments are revenue-based payments and are tied to crop production and the National Average Market Price for planted and considered planted, covered commodity crops on the farm.

Livestock Indemnity Program

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible livestock owners and contract growers for eligible livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather including losses due to floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat, and extreme cold. For 2011 losses, producers must file a notice of loss the earlier of either 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock was apparent to the participant or October 31, 2011. A notice of loss can be reported to the office by phone, fax, or e-mail. Eligible livestock deaths must have occurred in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested. An application for payment may be filed at any time in 2011, but must be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred. Please contact the office for additional eligibility requirements.

*****Montana FSA Newsletter Notice*****

Non-active agriculture producers must "opt-in" to receive future newsletters

Effective March 1, 2011, the Montana Farm Service Agency has issued a new newsletter policy geared toward improving FSA newsletter delivery and efficiency to the individual farmers, ranchers and agriculture community. FSA newsletters will continue to be sent to active agriculture producers as determined by the county FSA offices. No action is needed for active producers unless your household or business is receiving duplicate newsletters, in which case you should inform your local county FSA office. If you are not an "active" producer but are a landowner or are interested in receiving or continuing to receive an FSA newsletter, you must inform your local county office that you'd like to "Opt-in" and be added to the newsletter mailing list. In addition, you can choose to receive your newsletter electronically. Each newsletter not mailed saves the agency and taxpayer \$0.39. To request the electronic newsletter be emailed to you instead of receiving a newsletter through mail, please contact your county FSA office.

1099-G Has Been Issued

Producers who received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G in the mail. **ATTENTION: Refunds are no longer reported on the 1099-G.** If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your local FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Jody Lagerquist! Jody was re-elected to represent farmers in Local Area 3 (generally south of Hwy 5 and east of Hwy 16) on the county committee (COC). Jody was elected to his second consecutive term. Jon Bolstad was elected as 1st alternate to COC, and Chris Westergard was elected as 2nd alternate to COC.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought/sold land, added/ dropped rented land, changed shares in an entity, etc., make sure you report the changes to FSA as soon as possible. Failure to timely maintain accurate records with FSA can lead to program ineligibility and penalties. After a DCP contract has been approved, you must timely inform FSA of changes as soon as the change occurs. If that change happens before June 1, we need to be notified by June 1. If the change happens after June 1, we need to be notified when the change occurs but no later than the end of the contract period. For example, if you decide at seeding time that shares in the crop will change, you need to notify FSA of the new shares before June 1. If a landowner deeds land to a trust July 10, you need to notify FSA at that time, but no later than the end of the contract in September. Even if the landlord leases to you for cash, it is important that FSA knows of changes in their ownership. *Please talk to your landowners and let them know of the importance of notifying FSA of changes, even if that landowner doesn't get any payments from the FSA Office.*

Current USDA Settlements/Non-Judicial Claims Process:

-Native American Farmers & Ranchers Settlement Agreement (Keepseagle v. Vilsack): If you are a Native American who was denied a Farm Loan or Loan Servicing by the USDA between Jan. 1, 1981 and Nov. 24, 1999, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. To request a Claims Package or for more information, call 1-888-233-5506 or visit www.IndianFarmClass.com.

-Non-Judicial Claims Process for Hispanic & Women Farmers & Ranchers: If you believe that USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov.

-African American Farmers Settlement Agreement (Pigford II): This Settlement applies to African-American farmers who (a) submitted a request to file a late claim on or between October 13, 1999 and June 18, 2008, under the 1999 settlement in the earlier class action known as Pigford v. Glickman ("Pigford"), and (b) who did not receive a merits determination of their discrimination claim. For more information, call 1-866-950-5547 or 1-866-472-7826 or visit www.blackfarmercase.com.

2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) Signup Deadline is July 29, 2011

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) provides financial assistance for crop production and/or quality losses due to a natural disaster. SURE is a total farm revenue disaster program as opposed to the crop disaster programs of previous years, which were primarily production oriented programs. Therefore, all crops that a producer has an interest in are not only evaluated as to the production loss and quality, but revenue as well.

To be eligible for SURE, a producer must have at least a 10% production loss on a crop of economic significance; a policy or plan of insurance under Crop Insurance or FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops; and have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county by the Ag Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation, or be in a county contiguous to one receiving a disaster declaration.

Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if their actual production is less than 50% of the normal production on the SURE farm due to a natural disaster.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, beginning farmer or rancher, or limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without crop insurance or NAP coverage.

Producers who feel they had quality losses in 2009, other than low protein in wheat, should bring in assembly sheets or grading slips from a state grading lab.

SURE will issue payments to an eligible producer in the amount equal to 60% of the difference between the program guarantee and the total farm revenue. SURE will pay up to 90% of the crop's normal production on the farm.

Signup for 2009 crops ends on July 29, 2011. If you meet the guidelines of the program in 2009 (10% production loss associated with adverse weather on one crop of economic significance; insurance or NAP purchased on all 2009 crops other than the exceptions previously explained), contact the county FSA office as soon as possible.

Cooperation with Risk Management Agency:

The Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 requires the FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to work together to improve program compliance and integrity of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. RMA and FSA are required to coordinate a plan to identify, address and reconcile discrepancies of all relevant producer-derived information, and to coordinate a monitoring program to include fact finding relative to allegations of program fraud, waste, and abuse. FSA will assist RMA and insurance providers in monitoring conditions throughout the growing season and conduct growing season inspections. All suspected cases of fraud, waste, and abuse concerning the Federal Crop Insurance Program will be referred to RMA. FSA will also assist RMA with auditing claims. Producers may also report suspected cases of fraud, waste, and abuse to their local FSA County Office, the RMA Office or OIG.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

FSA's Farm Storage and Facility Loan (FSFL) Program provides low-interest financing for producers of eligible commodities to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15%, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85% of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of seven, ten, or twelve years are available depending on the amount of the loan.

Interest rates for each loan term may be different and are based on the rate in effect when the County Committee approves the loan request. Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. A partial disbursement of up to 50% of the total loan amount will be available, if desired, after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final disbursement will be made when all construction is completed.

An FSFL generally must be approved before delivery of any materials is accepted and before any site preparation or construction is begun. An environmental assessment must be completed before any site prep or facility construction.

The following commodities are eligible for facility loans: corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, wheat, barley, or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain; corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats, or barley harvested as other than whole grain; hay; renewable biomass; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables—cold storage facilities. Among other requirements, borrowers are responsible for obtaining annual multi-peril crop insurance or NAP coverage and all-peril insurance on the FSFL structure listing CCC as the loss payee. For more information, contact the county FSA office.

**Need Help
Planting
a Crop?**



Call **FARM RESCUE** if you are a family farmer that is experiencing a major injury, illness or natural disaster. Up to 1,000 acres planted free of charge.

701-252-2017
farmrescue.org

***Farm Rescue service is only available to producers*
in the following Montana counties: Carter,
Fallon, Wibaux, Richland, Roosevelt, Daniels,
Dawson, and Sheridan.**

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

SHERIDAN COUNTY FSA OFFICE
119 N. Jackson
Plentywood, MT 59254



PRESORTED
STANDARD U.S.
POSTAGE PAID
Bozeman, MT 59715
PERMIT #54

Selected Interest Rates -March 2011

Farm Operating - Direct	2.5%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Conservation Loan	4.875%
Emergency - Actual Loss	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility - 7-year	2.875%
Farm Storage Facility - 10-year	3.5%
Farm Storage Facility - 12-year	3.875%
Commodity Loans	1.25%
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%

Josie Johnson retired from the FSA Office the end of January. We will fill one of our two vacant positions in the near future. We'll be short staffed and administering multiple program signups, plus working on normal program maintenance. We appreciate your patience, and we hope that instructions sent out with forms help you have information complete when you visit the office. Thanks, *Donna*

Upcoming Important Dates to Remember:

- March 14:** CRP General Signup Begins.
March 31: DEADLINE to Request 2010 Marketing Assistance Loans/LDPs on Barley, Canola, Crambe, Flaxseed, Honey, Oats, Rapeseed, Wheat, and Sesame Seed.
April 1: NAP pull-off date for livestock on NAP crops intended for seed.
April 15: CRP General Signup DEADLINE.
May 1: NAP pull-off date for livestock on NAP hay acres.
May 30: Office closed in observance of Memorial Day.
May 31: DEADLINE to Request 2010 Marketing Assistance Loans/LDPs on Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Chickpeas, Soybeans, and Sunflower Seed.
June 1: 2011 DCP & ACRE Programs Filing Deadline.
July 4: Office closed in observance of Independence Day.
July 15: DEADLINE for annual acreage certification.
July 29: SURE Sign-up DEADLINE for 2009 Crop Year.
Ongoing: Continuous CRP signup.
IMPORTANT: *Notify FSA of changes to your farming operation.*

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